Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 HA-05 AID-05 FDRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /116 W

-----100918 142132Z /46

R 141141Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6800
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY SANA

CONFIDENTIAL KHARTOUM 1123

E.O. 11652: GDS TAGS: PEPR, SU, ET

SUBJECT: SUDAN-ETHIOPIAN CONTACTS

- 1. SUDANGOV ONCE AGAIN ACTIVE IN EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN MOMENTUM OF IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH ETHIOPIA. PROCESS WILL INCLUDE THREE SEPARATE HIGH-LEVEL VISITS. PROCESS BECAME PUBLIC FEW DAYS AGO WHEN MINSTATE FONAFFS DENG HAD WELL PUBLICIZED CONSULTATION WITH ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR YILMA TADESSE MARCH 11 TO DISCUSS MEETINGS BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTER OF SIERRA LEONE AND ETHIOPIAN OFFICIALS, "LED BY CHAIRMAN MENGISTU" ON IMPLEMENTATION OF FREETOWN AGREEMENT.
- 2. AMBASSADOR YILMA TADESSE SAID ETHIOPIA WILL WELCOME IMPENDING VISIT OF FIRST VICE PRESIDENT ABUL GASSIM MOHAMED IBRAHIM. IN ORDER TO MAKE ABUL GASSIM'S VISIT MORE SUCCONFIDENTIAL.

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CESSFUL, ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR INVITED SUDANESE FOREIGN AFFAIRS UNDER SECRETARY HASHIM OSMAN TO VISIT ADDIS FIRST TO MAKE PROCEDURAL PREPARATIONS "SINCE THIS WILL BE FIRST VISIT AT HIGH LEVEL SINCE DETERIORATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES." BEFORE THIS VISIT, HOWEVER, SENIOR EPMG OFFICIAL ALREADY VISITING KHARTOUM. AMBASSADOR HAS RECEIVED INVITATION TO SOCIAL FUNCTION MARCH 15 FOR

ETHIOPIAN PERMANENT SECRETARY MAJOR DAWIT WOLDE GIORGHIS WHO APPARENTLY ARRIVED IN KHARTOUM MARCH 14. VISIT HAS NOT BEEN ANNOUNCED AS OF TUESDAY A.M.

- 3. ABUL GASSIM TOLD AMBASSADOR RECENTLY THAT ANTI-EPMG BROADCASTS FROM SUDAN ARE BEING REDUCED. OTHER SOURCES SAY ERITREAN BROADCASTS HAVE STOPPED BECAUSE SUDANGOV REGARDS THEM AS POSSIBLE SOURCE OF UNREST AMONG 100,000 ERITREAN REFUGEES INSIDE SUDAN AS WELL AS IRRITANT TO ETHIOPIA. UNTIL NOW ETHIOPIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION (EDU) CONTINUES HOUR DAILY BROADCASTS FROM RADIO OMDURMAN.
- 4. COMMENT: ONCE AGAIN SUDANGOV AND EPMG ARE TRYING TO OVERCOME SERIOUS MUTUAL SUSPICIONS THROUGH HIGH LEVEL DIPLOMACY. REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW SUCCESSFUL THEY CAN BE, PARTICULARLY IF THERE IS NO GIVE BY ETHIOPIANS ON EITHER ANSAR OR ERITREA ISSUES. HOWEVER, WITH DRAMATIC TURN OF EVENTS IN OGADEN BOTH SIDES MAY FEEL NOW IS GOOD TIME TO TRY AGAIN. FOR PRESENT, AT LEAST. SUDAN-ETHIOPIA RELATIONS ARE APPARENTLY IMPROVING.

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